

**The FIRST TEN Pages of the Montana Common Core Standards (MCCS) for English Language
Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects
Beyond the Introduction of the MCCS
Highlights and Discussion Guide**

Introduction p. 3

- The College and Career Readiness Anchor standards were first determined to ensure that all students are literate for the 21st century. **Why start with the skills necessary to be literate in college and career readiness?** The standards were built with a backward design from college to kindergarten.
- "The Standards set requirements not only for English language arts (ELA) but also for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Just as students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas, so too must the Standards specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines." (MCCS p. 3) **Discuss and define literacy.**
- "The Standards also lay out a vision of what it means to be a literate person in the twenty-first century." (MCCS p. 3) **As you read the entire document please keep this statement in mind.**
- "Students who meet the Standards develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language." **What does this mean to you in your role as an educator?**

Key Design Considerations p. 4

College and Career Readiness (CCR) and grade-specific standards

- What is the significance of the College and Career Readiness Standards?
- What is the significance of the K-12 specific grade level/band standards?

A focus on the results rather than the means

- The standards are goals and as educators it is our role to help our students meet these goals. The standards emphasize required achievements, but do not delineate how teacher, curriculum developers, and states should reach these goals or what additional topics should be addressed. That is left to our educators' professional judgment. **What will "a focus on the results rather than the means" translate to in your district/school/classroom?**

An integrated model of literacy

- **How will your district/school/grade level team create an integrated model of literacy across all content areas?**

Research and media skills blended into the standards as a whole

- "The need to conduct research and to produce and consume media is embedded into every aspect of today's curriculum. In like fashion, research and media skills and understandings are embedded throughout the Standards rather than treated in a separate section." (MCCS p. 4)
How do you currently expose your staff or students to research and media skills? Will this be a shift in your instructional practices?

Shared responsibility for students; literacy development

- The K-5 standards incorporate literacy throughout the standards and expect it to be a shared responsibility. **How will your district/school/ grade level team collaborate together to accomplish this shared responsibility for literacy?**

Focus and Coherence in Instruction and Assessment p. 6

- The standards were created with College and Career Readiness Anchor standards. The CCR standards are one of many examples of focus and coherence for instruction and assessment. **Locate and list other examples of focus and coherence in the standards.**

What is not covered by the Standards? P. 7

- **After reading the list on page 7 of the MCCS for ELA and Literacy which statement do you value most as a professional?**



Students Who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening and Language

- The descriptions listed on MCCS p. 8 are said to offer a portrait of students who meet the standards. In your professional opinion what does the portrait of a student look like who is college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking, listening and language?

How to Read this Document

- This section is like gold. Read it carefully and find the structure within the standards document. What are the three main sections of the ELA and literacy standards? What are the strands of the ELA and literacy standards?
- "Standards for each grade within K–8 and for grades 9–10 and 11–12 follow the CCR anchor standards in each strand. Each *grade-specific standard* (as these standards are collectively referred to) corresponds to the same-numbered CCR anchor standard. Put another way, each CCR anchor standard has an accompanying grade-specific standard translating the broader CCR statement into grade-appropriate end-of-year expectations." (MCCS p. 9) Take time to identify this connection between the college and career readiness anchor standards and grade level standards. Revisit this often.
- Who is responsible for which portion of the Standards?

Key Features of the Standards p. 10

- *Reading: Text complexity and the growth of comprehension*
- *Writing: Text types, responding to reading, and research*
- *Speaking and Listening: Flexible communication and collaboration*
- *Language: Conventions, effective use, and vocabulary*

Appendices A, B, and C p. 10

- Make Appendix A your new best friend. Appendix A is filled with invaluable information.
- Utilize Appendix B and its rich exemplars of complex text. Which instructional strategies will you use to engage your students in complex text?
- Appendix C is a useful resource of writing exemplars.

